



Captain Mark W. Smith

Chaplain Corps, United States Navy

Coast Guard Pacific Area Chaplain
Force Readiness Command Chaplain



Captain Smith is the Coast Guard Pacific Area and Force Readiness Command Chaplain. He administers the PACAREA and FORCECOM Command Religious Programs, providing technical supervision to seventeen chaplains and a host of Coast Guard lay leaders and clergy volunteers.

Smith was a Presbyterian pastor in Port Angeles, Washington when he was commissioned -- at Coast Guard Station Port Angeles -- as a US Navy Chaplain in 1989.

As a chaplain, he has ministered in the Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard, as well as the Joint and Combined operational environments. His non-operational assignments were with Naval Training Center San Diego, Naval Medical Center San Diego, Naval Postgraduate School Monterey as an instructor and chaplain, and most recently at Marine Corps Combat Development Command, Quantico, VA.



Smith's first operational tour was also his first Naval tour, serving as Command Chaplain of the USS San Jose (AFS-7) for two deployments before and during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. He was also the last US Navy Chaplain to serve with Operation Deep Freeze at McMurdo Station and South Pole Antarctica. He made three full deployments and two additional visits in three-and-a-half years. In a subsequent tour, Smith served as the First Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group Chaplain, Camp Pendleton, CA for the return of I MEF following OIF III, individually debriefing 250 senior leaders from their war-time experience. The following year he deployed to Camp Fallujah, Iraq as the Deputy I MEF Forward Chaplain, charged with direct responsibility for the work of 75 Religious Ministry Teams in Al Anbar Province. During that year-long deployment he developed the Marine Corps guidance for indigenous religious leader liaison by chaplains and redesigned the warrior return program, elements of which have become Naval and DoD standards. It was this work that led to becoming a doctrine writer/integrator at the Marine Corps Combat Development Command.

Smith has conducted research and published in the areas of trauma and spirituality and continues to be involved in the development of operational stress programs for all DoD, and as a result of the doctrine experience is also advising the development of doctrine as FORCECOM begins to take on that responsibility in the modernized Coast Guard.

Smith holds a B.A. from California State University (1981), Bakersfield, CA, an M.Div. from Fuller Theological Seminary (1983), Pasadena, CA, and a Th.M. in Ethics from Princeton Theological Seminary (2001), Princeton, NJ.

His awards include the Meritorious Service Medal (3), the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Navy-Marine Corps Commendation Medal (3), and the Navy Achievement Medal (2). He holds additional qualification designators for Ethics Subspecialty (1450), and Fleet Marine Force Officer.